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# THE MOTHER

BY ISOBEL HUME FISHER

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FROM mother's breast to mother's breast men go:  
From the warm arms of love that cling and hold  
They speed with the one gift youth may bestow;  
Then in her patient bosom, deep and cold,  
Greatness and littleness,  
Earth folds them in her ancient quietness.

We are impatient for their joy, we weep  
For every sorrow their young hearts sustain,  
Yet she alone can give the alms of sleep  
The guerdon of all toil—surcease from pain;  
And only on her breast  
They sleep forgetfully and undistressed.

To this old mother all her sons come home:  
Of all their loves she has the last embrace.  
From age to age, for hearts that bide or roam,  
She is the shelter and the resting place;  
Our sons who fall today  
Are cradled where their wild forefathers lay.

She grudges none possession or delight,  
She wears her beauty as of old she did,  
And woos men's hearts with each spring's gold and white;  
Yet in her bosom all her babes lie hid;  
There, weary of the sun,  
We go to find our children, one by one.

Now, in the crash and horror of our days  
She wraps herself in immemorial peace,  
And waits the certain end of all man's ways:  
He will lie down at length and all wars cease,  
When in a fold of green  
Lies all the glory that the world has seen.

ISOBEL HUME FISHER.